United Nations S/2004/796

Security Council

Distr.: General
7 October 2004

Original: English

Identical notes verbales dated 6 October 2004 from the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

The Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council and, with reference to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations submitted pursuant to resolution 1559, has the honour to submit the reply of the Syrian Arab Republic to the above-mentioned report (see annex).

I wish to request that the present note and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

04-54034 (E) 071004

Annex to the identical notes verbales dated 6 October 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Reply of the Syrian Arab Republic to the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic, having examined the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), reaffirms its respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the related goals and objectives and expresses its high esteem for the position of the States members of the Security Council that did not agree to any disparaging reference Syria in the resolution.

Despite this, we should like to reply to the report of the Secretary-General, which deals, outside of the text of resolution 1559, with Syria, its military presence in Lebanon and its diplomatic relations, and we wonder about the objective criteria adopted in the report for its determination of the main directions of Lebanese public opinion regarding the questions raised.

We should like to make the following observations:

- The Syrian Arab Republic declares its adherence to the Lebanese Charter of National Reconciliation (Taif Agreement) of 1989, particularly its provision relating to the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon, which reads as follows: "The two Governments — the Syrian Government and the Lebanese National Accord Government — shall decide to redeploy the Syrian forces in the region of the Bekaa as far as the Hammana-Mudairij-Ain Dara line and, in case of need, at other points to be determined by a joint Lebanese-Syrian military committee ..." Those forces have carried out the decisions of the joint military committee, considered as the framework agreed upon between the two countries, and were recently redeployed for the fifth time;

- The Syrian Arab Republic reasserts its support for Lebanon's independence and sovereignty and the inviolability of its territory. In 1991 it concluded with Lebanon the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination, registered in the United Nations Treaty Series under No. 28932. The treaty mapped out a solid framework for privileged fraternal ties between the two countries in various fields;

- The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates the position which it communicated in a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President and members of the Security Council dated 2 September 2004 (A/58/883-S/2004/706), in which it stated that the discussion of Syrian-Lebanese bilateral relations in the Security Council constituted a precedent that would make the Council a tool for illegal interference in the internal affairs of independent States Members of the United Nations. This is in conflict with Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations, which explicitly prohibits

intervention of the United Nations "in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state", and constitutes a violation of the functions of the Security Council defined in the Charter, particularly in view of the fact that the privileged fraternal ties existing between Syria and Lebanon pose no threat to international security and peace and there exists no complaint by either of those States against the other;

– In Syria's view, the real causes of the troubled situation in the region is the absence of a just and comprehensive peace, owing to Israel's constant defiance of the Charter of the United Nations, refusal to implement the resolutions adopted by the Organization and continuing violations of the Geneva Conventions in the occupied Palestinian territory.

It has been our hope, a hope that we still entertain, that the Security Council will shoulder its responsibilities and prevail upon Israel to comply with the more than 40 resolutions adopted by the Security Council that call upon Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967 as a basis for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates its willingness to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to seeking the best possible ways to realize the hope expressed at the close of his report, namely the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in keeping with the relevant Security Council resolutions. As for Syria, finally, what we were hoping to see internationalized and followed up by the Security Council was the question of the Israeli occupation, which constitutes a threat to international security and peace, and not Syrian-Lebanese relations, which respect the goals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and are aimed at bringing peace and stability to the region.